



REPORT

ON THE

HEALTH OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH OF WEST BROMWICH,

FOR THE YEAR 1904, BY

HERBERT MANLEY, M.A., M.D., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health to the Borough.

TO WHICH ARE APPENDED THE REPORTS OF THE SANITARY
INSPECTOR, FOOD AND DRUGS INSPECTOR, AND PUBLIC
ANALYST.

WEST BROMWICH :

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MUNICIPAL BOROUGH OF WEST BROMWICH.

Population, 1901 Census	65,175
Estimated Population, 1904	67,186
Area	...	...	...	5,860 acres

Rateable Value of Property assessed to the

Relief of the Poor, November, 1904 ... £223,732 0 0

Rateable Value of Property assessed to the

General District Rate, November, 1904 £204,618 10 0

Number of Houses in the Borough, November,

1904 ... 14,181

*TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
SANITARY COMMITTEE OF THE COUNTY
BOROUGH OF WEST BROMWICH.*

GENTLEMEN,

In presenting to you my report on the Borough of West Bromwich for the year 1904 there are many things to which it is my duty to direct your serious attention. It is a small thing that I should notice the comparative figures of the statistics which are appended to the report, although they are well worthy of your reading.

Introductory

I have first to thank you for recognising the value of the services, which it is my honour to be able to render to my native town, by an increase in my salary. Personally, I consider that the duties confided to me are of the highest importance, and in consideration of that increase I have felt it my duty to diminish my obligations in other directions by resigning the largest part of my contract practice. Permit me to take this opportunity of assuring you that the work which is done by me as Medical Officer of Health occupies the highest place in my thoughts and that no other consideration shall ever interfere with my attention to the improvement of the health of our Borough.

Before the Borough can be said to be completely and fully equipped from a sanitary point of view there are many problems which present themselves for solution.

The first of these is the gradual conversion of the midden system into a water-carriage system, so that all the excreta of our inhabitants can be treated at the Sewage Farm. This problem is slowly, but very surely, approaching its solution. Those who have watched the reports made from year to year cannot fail to know that the conversions are advancing as steadily as could be wished without creating anything like a revolution. Your Sanitary Officials are fully aware of the burdens which of necessity fall upon the property owners of this town. We are well

Conversion of
the Midden
System

Conversion of
the Midden
System

aware of the fact that many houses are the property of comparatively poor landlords, and hitherto no hardship has been knowingly inflicted. Much has been said about the contribution which it is in the power of the Council to grant where conversion is made without nuisance being shown; but it is also the duty of your Sanitary Officers to see that no unfair claim is made upon such a fund. Such a claim might be unfair, not only to the ratepayers as a body, but to those who have carried out the conversion without such assistance. The evil will assuredly work out its own remedy. In a few years when all the rest of the properties are provided with proper sanitary appliances, the landlords who have preferred to adhere to the ancient order of things, and upon whose premises the abominable nightsoil carts are still compelled to come, poisoning the air, the adjacent streets, and the surrounding fields, will find it difficult to let their houses.

Housing of
the Working
Classes Act

Much has been said from time to time by various people about the need for a scheme of building houses for the artisan population under the provisions of the Housing of the Working Classes Act. I may say plainly, that so far, to my mind, no case has been made out for such a scheme in West Bromwich. The population per house has steadily diminished ever since I have interested myself in the statistics of the town, and it is my firm opinion that such overcrowding as exists is not due to the lack of houses but to the inability or unwillingness of the people to pay a fair rent for the accommodation which decency requires.

There are, however, other provisions of these Acts, besides the building of houses, which might well receive your attention. It cannot be denied by those who have an intimate knowledge of West Bromwich that there are street improvements which are crying out to be made. It is said of West Bromwich that we have a fine park, but an approach thereto which is horrible. It would perhaps be unwise to indicate details further, but I am sure that the spots which need to be swept away will readily recur to the mind of anyone who has canvassed a Ward and seen the slums which we possess.

The abolition of Typhoid Fever is another object to which the minds of the Committee need to be directed. To that end the abolition of privy middens and the destruction of rookeries are means greatly to be desired, but these things seem in the distant future, and until then we must make suitable provision for treating Typhoid Fever in our own Hospital and cease to depend upon the assistance of outside institutions to do for us what we should do for ourselves. The Borough Hospital has at present ample accommodation for such cases of Typhoid as need removal, but there is not sufficient sleeping room for the nurses. This matter in my opinion is the *most urgent* of all the sanitary needs of the Borough.

Typhoid
Fever

The drainage of the Hospital has now been completed by means of a loan, and it is quite suitable for the admission and treatment of Typhoid patients. During the past year I have received repeated applications from the nurses connected with the West Bromwich Nursing Home to deal with cases of Typhoid Fever, and also from the West Bromwich Workhouse. It has hitherto been impossible to accede to any request for admission, but grants have been made by the Sanitary Committee for the payment of additional special nurses for these cases, and some have been removed to the Children's Hospital, Birmingham. I feel very strongly that we are responsible for these cases in the present state of public opinion about epidemic disease, and that in the long run we must recognise the duty of making a suitable provision for cases of Typhoid in our existing Hospital.

The abolition of the privy midden, and with it of the pollution of our night air by stinking carts, naturally leads me to the next of our needs—a destructor. This question has been before the Council ever since we were incorporated, and even before that time, and it is to be hoped that by now people have acquired a more correct view of the nature and non-injurious character of dust or refuse destructors. Every effort is now made to reduce the amount of combustible material removed in dust-bins and from dry middens, but the result still remains that the neighbourhood of our tips is disfigured by hedges full of waste paper of a vile and filthy type.

Destructor

Public
Abattoirs

There remains the provision of one or more public abattoirs. The question of the meat supply has received considerable attention from the Committee of late years, and I venture to assert that at the present time the meat sold in the Borough is of a high type. It is, however, not possible to accede to the growing requests for private slaughter-houses in yards which are often held in common or are so shut in by other properties as to be unsuitable.

Your Medical Officer is fully alive to the danger which thus arises by a continuous policy of closing old slaughter-houses and refusing to license others, but it would seem that the best course would be to provide one or more small slaughter-houses more especially for the killing of swine, and thus to prohibit the keeping and killing of pigs upon licensed premises, which is a very considerable feature in this town.

Underground
Lavatories

There are, of course, other matters, such as the provision of underground lavatories, the culverting and covering of ditches, etc., etc., to which I might allude, to say nothing of the fact that both your Medical Officer of Health and your Sanitary Inspector are without a private office. The negotiations with property owners are often essentially of a very private nature, and have to be carried on while promenading the old and dilapidated Market Hall or in the presence of the whole office staff.

I am well aware that we cannot afford all these things, or, indeed, any of them just now; but I thought it better to put a comprehensive and complete picture before you rather than to bring forward scheme after scheme and be accused of never being content.

I have the honour to remain,

Yours faithfully,

HERBERT MANLEY,

M.A., M.D., CANTAB., D.P.H.,

ETC., ETC.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The population of West Bromwich, as estimated by the Registrar-General to the middle of 1904, is 67,186, for whom are provided 14,181 houses.

Population

The number of inmates of our institutions, namely, the Union Workhouse, Poor-Law Schools, Hospitals and Asylum, may be reckoned at 1,480, leaving a population to be housed amounting to 65,700. The average per house thus works out at 4.6 persons per house. It may be remarked that this population per house is 0.4 below the figures of the census year, and is well worthy of the consideration of those who assert that the people of this Borough are necessarily overcrowded. It also bears out the fact that statistics as well as appearances point out the progress of house building as compared with the increase of population.

Two thousand two hundred and fifty-four children were added to our population during the year, giving a birth-rate of 33.5 per 1,000, and maintaining the uniform decrease in the birth-rate, which has now become a normal fact in English statistics. The fall represents a decrease of 2 per 1,000 on the decennial average. At the same time it may be noted that the deaths of children under one year of age show a diminution, the rate per 1,000 births having fallen for the first time below 150. An equally marked decline may be noted in the deaths under five years of age.

Births

The total deaths amount to 1,172, a figure which requires correction, for the deaths of non-residents in the Public Institutions of the Borough, and also for the comparatively few deaths which occur in the Hospitals of Birmingham, and which are reported to us. The corrected total amounts to 1,076, and is the lowest corrected total since 1894. The resulting death-rate is 15.9, which is 2.7 below the average of the preceding ten years, and which has never previously been approached in our statistical history.

Deaths

The rates for the year 1904 are as follows:—

	Birth-rate.		Death-rate.	
England and Wales	...	27.9	...	16.2
76 Great Towns	...	29.1	...	17.2
West Bromwich	33.5	...	15.9

The comparison is very satisfactory to us.

Deaths

The decline in the infantile death-rate, which has already been mentioned, requires further notice. The 337 deaths under one year of age were as follows:—Diarrhœa and Enteritis, 59; Lung Diseases, 53; Tuberculosis, 29; Premature Birth and other accidents of Birth, 58; Accident, 3; Epidemic Diseases, 11; Unclassified, 124.

As compared with the rates for the whole country the result is this:—

England and Wales	....	146	per 1,000 births
76 Large Towns...	...	160	„
West Bromwich...	...	140	„

It is much to be desired that these figures, as in the case of the number of inhabitants per house, should receive the careful consideration of those who advocate expensive Municipal schemes for the prevention of infantile mortality.

The deaths between one year and five also demand a word of notice, and amounted to 134, 40 less than the year preceding, and no less than 182 below the record of 1902. The analysis of these deaths is as follows:—Diarrhœa and Enteritis, 23; Lung Disease, 48; Tuberculosis, 23; Accident, 2; Epidemic Diseases, 21; Unclassified, 17.

The deaths from Zymotic Disease amount to 125, and are distributed thus:—Scarlet Fever, 10; Measles, 7; Whooping Cough, 15; Diphtheria and Croup, 6; Typhoid Fever, 9; and Diarrhœa with Enteritis, 78.

This total is 14 less than the preceding year, and shows a zymotic death-rate of 1.8 per 1,000, against a decennial average of 2.5.

The comparative rates are as follows:—England and Wales, 1.94; 76 Large Towns, 2.49; West Bromwich, 1.86.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Smallpox

During the year we have had the good fortune to escape entirely from any visitation of Smallpox. In connection with this matter, allusion may be made to the very important and representative Conference which was held in London at the instance of the London County Council, and at which I had the honour to represent you.

It has long been obvious to those who are interested in such matters that tramps are the most prominent factor in the dissemination of the disease of Smallpox in our midst, and that a more rigorous supervision of tramp wards and common lodging houses was the best means of checking the evil. Action has now been taken, on the motion of the Authorities of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and it is to be hoped that some result will follow. I had the honour to impress upon the Conference two points which seemed to me to go to the root of the matter, namely, the uniform treatment of those admitted to casual wards and the more accurate definition of a common lodging house. As regards the casual wards of our own Union Workhouse, I have satisfied myself that a perfectly just and not too pleasant course is pursued with regard to its inmates; that, further, the majority of those inmates are professional inhabitants of casual wards, who go a definite round and have no other home; that to these men the tasks allotted in the form of oakum picking, stone breaking, and wood chopping, are comparatively light; and, finally, that only about two per cent. are genuinely in search of work.

Much unnecessary talk was raised at the Conference about the compulsory re-vaccination of the tramp and the advisability of bribing him to assent to this operation. This is a view to which I felt myself unable to assent, nor could I advise that you should vote public money in such a form of bribery.

I am, as I have told you before, strongly in favour of municipal houses for lodging the roadster. Population and experiments in other towns show that there is no need for such institutions to be burdensome to the rates if properly constructed and managed upon reasonable lines. The poor man's hotel can be clean, commodious, convenient for his purposes, and still not unduly palatial, and I hope to see the time when our own Council will promote such an institution.

Scarlet Fever is amongst us, as usual, but not in any marked degree. Of the 128 cases notified during the year only 84 were removed to Hospital; the remainder, either from the good character of their surroundings or the severe

Scarlet Fever nature of the attack, being nursed at home. The mortality among cases so treated amounted to 44, or about one-sixth.

Scarlet Fever, as we now see it, is rarely of a malignant type, and does not appear to leave such serious results behind it. There are from time to time cases of exceptional severity, especially in grown-up persons, which revert to the old and classical type.

Typhoid
Fever

Forty-three cases of Typhoid Fever were reported during the year, with seven deaths. This is still too many for an up-to-date town, in which the water supply is above suspicion, and where the supply of milk is under regular and careful supervision. The abolition of privy middens is proceeding at a steady rate, and will in time produce good results. With the completion of the Smallpox Hospital, we shall now be able to arrange for the admission of such cases of Typhoid as have not proper provision for home nursing and isolation, and thus prevent the existence of infection by direct contact, which ought never to occur in a house where proper precautions can be taken. Much has been done by the District Nurses, and the Committee has assisted them in every way by providing additional night nurses, but the end can only be attained by removal to the surroundings and treatment of a Hospital.

Diphtheria
and
Membranous
Croup

Diphtheria and Membranous Croup supplied 24 cases, of which seven were fatal. Some of these cases were of so mild a character that their infectious nature is almost open to doubt, but I do not attach any undue value to the discovery of the bacillus, as it is said to exist in some healthy throats. Fortunately, we have not much of this class of disease in the Borough.

The remainder of the Zymotic Diseases calls for no comment.

INFECTIOUS HOSPITAL.

Smallpox and
Scarlet Fever

One case of Smallpox, admitted to the Hospital from Handsworth, was of a very mild type, and remained but a short time.

Two hundred and thirty-four cases of Scarlet Fever were received, of which 85 were from West Bromwich, 114

from Handsworth, and 35 from Perry Barr. Four cases proved fatal, a result which compares very favourably with the statistics of Hospitals of a similar character elsewhere.

Smallpox and
Scarlet Fever

As is not unusual in the case of Scarlet Fever, a certain number of " return " cases have been reported, but every precaution has been taken in the way of disinfection and cleansing, and it cannot be said that in this respect our record is worse than that of all infectious hospitals.

The two needs of the Hospital, now that the drainage is completed, are the improvement and extension of the nursing block and the provision of a discharging ward. It will be my duty to submit details of these matters to you during the ensuing year.

The Smallpox Hospital in Friar Park is now completed, and will be fully equipped by the time this report is in your hands.

With regard to the provision for Typhoid Fever, I have already written in my introduction, and shall not again dilate upon the subject.

SANITARY WORK.

The new duties which have devolved upon your Medical Officer during the year are governed by the Midwives' Act and by the new arrangement with regard to education.

Midwives'
Act

As the registration of existing midwives cannot be completed before April 1st, 1905, it is yet too soon to speak with certainty. The Council have appointed the Sanitary Committee as the supervising authority, and when the list is completed it may be necessary to draw up some scheme for properly enforcing the orders of the Central Midwives Board.

At the time of the passing of the Act, there appeared to be about forty to fifty women practising as midwives in this Borough, and forms were supplied to the majority of them. Only 18 have availed themselves of the privilege of registration.

Those midwives so registered will after the first of April be the only women permitted to practise as midwives with-

Midwives'
Act

out having passed through a proper education in midwifery. Childbed fever has never been prevalent in this district, and it is hoped that it will now be stamped out everywhere.

Inspection of
Children

The supervision of children attending elementary schools being now under a department of the Corporation, the work formerly done by the Medical Officer to the School Board is now transferred to the Medical Officer of Health, who happened on this occasion to be one and the same.

In order to facilitate the inspection of children, your Medical Officer attends every Friday morning at the Education Office, there to meet the Attendance Officers, and if necessary to confer with the heads of the department. During the last three months of the year upwards of fifty children were examined at the Office, and their cases dealt with in a careful and judicial spirit. It is unfortunate that a large number of cases are every year excluded from school owing to want of cleanliness on the part of parents, especially as regards verminous heads. The presence of vermin soon produces sores, and the child is a danger to others and a misery to itself.

I have also examined the defective and imbecile children reported to me, either at school or at their homes. In each instance it has been necessary to deal with the particular features of the case. Some children can derive considerable benefit from attending school, although of defective intellect, and I have much pleasure in testifying to the care and pains bestowed upon these little ones by the teachers. Some could attend school if proper chairs were provided, but cannot sit on forms, and some can learn lessons, but are physically unable to undergo drill. All these cases can be met without the necessity of making separate provision for a special school for defectives and imbeciles.

In the cases which I have discovered of undoubted Tuberculosis of the Lungs, or Consumption, I have thought it best to permanently exclude the child from school, and thus prevent any possibility of direct infection.

So far, the new arrangement of the work has proved very successful, and I have every hope that it will assist the

Committee in maintaining the high standard of attendance at which this Borough aims.

The meat supply of the Borough has continued under careful inspection, and I have reason to think that the standard has been materially raised during the last few years. The butchers now usually report any doubtful carcase to the Inspector, and where doubt exists it is further seen by the Medical Officer. No case of serious friction has arisen.

Inspection of
Meat

There are at present 37 slaughter-houses on the list, of which 25 are old licenses and 12 are held on an annual tenure. The policy of dealing with disused slaughter-houses has been, in my opinion, quite successful, and the number has been reduced by over 100 since I first took office. But it will shortly be necessary for the Committee to take into consideration the provision of a small and not expensive central abattoir, in which for a small fee those butchers who do not possess a slaughter-house of their own may kill beasts, and where the inhabitants generally should be able to have their swine killed in a cleanly and proper way, with full facilities for dressing the meat, which cannot be obtained in small private yards. No serious complaint has been made of the condition of any of the slaughter-houses.

My attention has also been drawn to the conditions under which bread is baked by the small retail bakers of the Borough, and I have been in communication with the leaders of the trade on this subject. It is my opinion that this Committee has no power over such private bakeries where no external labour is employed, and while realising that fact I have obtained a list of such bakehouses, and shall require a strict attention to the sanitation of the premises.

Bakeries

The report of the detailed work of the Department in the matters of midden conversion, drainage, and the removal of nuisances generally, will be found in the appended report of the Sanitary Inspector. It only remains for the Medical Officer to add that the sanitary condition of the factories and workshops of the Borough continues to receive constant and systematic attention. The visits of Mr. Jackson, the

Midden
Conversion,
etc.

Midden
Conversion,
etc.

Factory Inspector, and any of his lady colleagues, are duly met, and all requirements which he makes are regularly carried out. All new workshops are reported to him, and the Department works in conjunction with him.

Offensive
Trades

During the year the Committee has approved a set of bye-laws for offensive trades. It is true that we have very few of these, but it has been thought advisable to put ourselves upon a proper footing, so that any effluvium nuisance arising from them may be promptly and effectually dealt with.

Common
Lodging
Houses

The common lodging houses have been kept under rigorous supervision, but until the Committee are also prepared to pass bye-laws for houses let in lodgings, and until some more clear definition of the term lodging house is given by statute, it will be comparatively easy to evade our requirements. The Tramp Conference, to which I have already alluded, has these matters before them, and further legislation may follow—when the Government have leisure to deal with Public Health questions.

The customary and necessary statistics are appended to the report, together with the reports of the Sanitary Inspector, the Borough Analyst, and the Inspector of Food and Drugs.

TABLE I.—VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT DURING 1904 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Births.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.				Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Non- residents registered in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.	Nett Deaths at all ages belonging to the District.	
		Number.	Rate.	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.					Number	Rate.
				Number	Rate per 1,000 Births registered 6.	Number	Rate.					
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
1894	61210	2207	35.5	337	152	1105	18.4	214	102	No return previous to 1904.	1003	16.3
1895	61780	2221	35.9	349	157	1286	20.8	218	83		1203	19.4
1896	62350	2198	35.2	399	181	1350	21.5	236	102		1248	20.0
1897	62920	2280	36.4	398	175	1347	21.4	239	104		1243	19.7
1898	63490	2269	35.7	415	182	1360	21.4	239	112		1148	18.0
1899	64060	2364	36.8	425	179	1307	30.4	207	99		1200	18.8
1900	64630	2242	34.2	439	191	1453	22.4	256	106		1347	20.8
1901	65200	2229	34.0	363	163	1211	18.5	205	88		1123	17.2
1902	65910	2287	34.6	372	162	1433	21.7	255	126		1307	19.3
1903	66558	2193	33.9	376	164	1199	18.1	223	106		1093	16.3
Averages for years 1894-1903	63811	2249	35.2	387	170	1305	21.4	229	102	7	1191	18.6
1904	67186	2254	33.5	337	149	1172	17.4	239	103		1076	15.9

TABLE II.

I.	II.
Institutions within the District receiving sick and infirm persons from outside the District.	Institutions outside the District receiving sick and infirm persons from the District.
Union Workhouse	Children's Hospital, Birmingham
Poor Law Schools	General Hospital, Birmingham
Sandwell Asylum	Private Hospital, Birmingham
Infectious Hospital	Private Hospital, Handsworth
Smallpox Hospital	
District Hospital	

TABLE III.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING THE
YEAR 1904.

Notifiable Disease.	Cases notified in whole District. At all Ages.	Number of Cases removed to Hospital.
Smallpox	Nil	Nil
Cholera	Nil	Nil
Diphtheria... ..	20	Nil
Membranous Croup	4	Nil
Erysipelas	88	Nil
Scarlet Fever	128	84
Typhus Fever	Nil	Nil
Enteric Fever	44	Nil
Relapsing Fever	Nil	Nil
Continued Fever	Nil	Nil
Puerperal Fever	7	Nil
Plague	Nil	Nil
Total	291	84

TABLE IV.

CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH DURING YEAR 1904.

CAUSES OF DEATH. 1.	Deaths in or belonging to whole District at subjoined Ages.							Total Deaths in Public Institu- tions in the District. 9.
	All ages. 2.	Under 1 year. 3.	1 and under 5. 4.	5 and under 15. 5.	15 and under 25. 6.	25 and under 65. 7.	65 and up- wards. 8.	
Measles	7	2	5	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	10	2	3	4	1	...	...	4
Whooping Cough	15	6	8	1	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria and Mem- branous Croup	2	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
Croup	4	1	2	1	...	...	...	...
Enteric Fever	9	...	3	1	3	2	...	3
Epidemic Influenza	8	...	1	...	...	7	...	...
Diarrhœa	78	53	22	...	...	1	2	1
Enteritis	9	6	1	...	...	1	1	...
Puerperal Fever	3	...	...	...	...	3	...	...
Phthisis	53	...	2	1	9	40	1	15
Other Tubercular Dis- eases	59	29	21	2	7	...	...	17
Cancer, Malignant Dis- ease	26	...	...	1	...	16	9	12
Bronchitis	149	38	27	1	3	39	41	9
Pneumonia	52	11	21	1	1	14	4	5
Pleurisy	2	...	...	...	..	1	1	2
Other Diseases of Res- piratory Organs	4	4	...	...	...	..	...	...
Alcoholism — Cirrhosis of Liver	11	...	...	...	...	9	2	2
Venereal Diseases	8	4	1	...	...	3	...	2
Premature Birth	56	56	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diseases and Accidents of Parturition	7	2	...	...	...	5	..	...
Heart Diseases	39	...	...	4	...	25	10	20
Accidents	16	3	2	3	2	2	4	20
Suicides	9	...	...	...	...	8	1	...
All Other Causes	440	124	15	12	1	126	162	127
All Causes	1076	341	134	34	27	302	238	239

TABLE V.

PARTICULARS AS TO ACTION TAKEN UNDER FACTORY
AND WORKSHOPS ACT, 1901.*No. of Workshops on Register at end of 1904 :—*

Workshop Bakehouses ...	...	...	...	55
Breeze Banks ...	...	...	...	9
Dressmaking and Tailoring Establishments			...	25
Miscellaneous Trades ...	...	...	...	71
Total ...				<u>160</u>

PARTICULARS OF DEFECTS FOUND.

Nuisances under Public Health Acts :—

Want of Cleanliness ...	...	...	...	9
Overcrowding ...	...	...	...	1
Other Nuisances ...	...	...	...	1
Sanitary Accommodations—				
Unsuitable or defective	...	...	...	6
Not separate for sexes	...	...	...	2
Total ...				<u>19</u>

Eighteen references were made by H.M. Inspector as to matters remediable under the Public Health Acts, but not under the Factory Acts.

Sanitary Inspector's Report,

FOR THE YEAR 1904.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

INTRODUCTION.

I have the honour to submit my sixth Annual Report as Sanitary Inspector for the County Borough of West Bromwich.

No change in the staff has taken place during the year, and it gives me great pleasure to again testify to the valuable assistance rendered by the District Inspectors, J. Cotterell, H. Topping, and W. R. Martin.

Although the work generally has been of a routine description, and therefore does not present any new and striking feature, I am glad to say that the progress chronicled in previous reports has been maintained. Not only does the number of inspections of all descriptions again exceed 30,000, but the nature and extent of the permanent sanitary improvements effected are extremely encouraging.

GENERAL SANITARY WORK.

HOUSE-TO-HOUSE INSPECTIONS.

The systematic house-to-house visitations required by Section 92 of the Public Health Act, 1875, have again been continued, 1,356 houses in 29 streets in Greets Green, Spon Lane and Sandwell Wards having been inspected. The number of notices resulting from these visitations was not so large as usual, the previous visitations having evidently produced an improvement of conditions so that recurring nuisances were nothing like as numerous. At the same time the visitations afforded an opportunity for bringing about the amendment of many insanitary conditions, for which both owner and occupiers were severally responsible.

MISCELLANEOUS INSPECTIONS.

Twelve thousand one hundred and forty-one miscellaneous inspections, including the investigation of premises concerning which complaints had been received, and also the periodical inspection of common yards, have been made, the latter visits being of great service in inducing occupiers to maintain the sanitary conveniences and yards used by them in a more cleanly condition. But for such visits there is no doubt that with the system of divided responsibility necessitated by the common yard system, scant attention would be paid in many instances to the matters above mentioned.

DRAIN TESTING.

The new "Eclipse" drain-testing machine has been utilised on nine occasions, and has been instrumental in locating several serious defects in drains. In only a single instance was a negative result obtained.

NOTICES SERVED.

The number of preliminary notices served was 1,600, detailed particulars of which are given in Table II.

Subsequently, the premises referred to in notices were visited by the District Inspectors or myself, the total number of such re-inspections being 4,365. Some 346 circular or special letters were despatched to owners or occupiers requesting compliance with notices. Acting on your instructions, 235 statutory notices were served, 185 of which were given under the Public Health Acts, the remaining 50 being given under various sections of the Corporation Act of 1900.

SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS EFFECTED.

The character of the sanitary improvements effected, as a result of the action of the department, will be realised on referring to Table III., in which full particulars are given. The number of such improvements, viz., 3,760, comprises, as previously stated, many important permanent structural alterations as well as temporary works necessary to abate nuisances of a recurring character. The total number of nuisances actually abated was 2,632, as compared with 2,580 last year.

Filthy and Dilapidated Houses and Outbuildings.

Five hundred and three houses have been cleansed and whitewashed, the internal brickwork, plastering, and wood-work being repaired in 182 cases. Fifty-eight leaking roofs were made watertight, and defective eaves and downspouting of 88 premises were renewed or repaired. During the course of the year some 159 wash-houses or other outbuildings were cleansed or repaired, several owners substituting earthenware sinks in place of insanitary brick sinks or supplying glazed stoneware waste pipes where the more satisfactory remedy was not adopted.

Surface Paving and Drainage of Yards.

In 53 yards the surface paving has been renewed, extended, or repaired. In 11 cases premises hitherto unconnected with the sewer have been properly drained, and 110 lengths of stoneware pipe drains have been laid in substitution of surface channels for the use of 362 houses. One hundred and eight manholes or inspection chambers and 373 gully traps have been provided in connection with the new drainage systems referred to.

Disused Wells.

The list of known disused wells, which now number upwards of 100, is continually being added to, as many owners have in the past resorted to the unsatisfactory method of covering the mouths of the disused wells with timber, etc., rather than filling the same in. On the slightest indication of subsidence, owners are at once communicated with, and in 22 instances wells have been properly filled in. In two of these cases, however, the previous existence of the well was unknown, and loss of life or serious injury was only narrowly averted.

Privy and Water-closet Accommodation.

Some 147 notices were served in connection with foul and dilapidated or leaking privies. In only 30 instances did owners resort to temporary measures, the majority evidently recognising that the only satisfactory remedy was the substitution of water-closets. A considerable number of privy conversions were also voluntarily carried out, the

total number of privies abolished and water-closets substituted being respectively 337 and 354. In only one instance was a waste water-closet provided, and in this connection it may be mentioned that several owners have already replaced or are contemplating replacing waste water-closets by those provided with suitable flushing apparatus.

Notwithstanding the number of privies converted during the year, it was only necessary to make 38 official representations under Section 66 of the West Bromwich Corporation Act, 1900, and in only seven cases to execute the work in default.

One hundred and sixty-one choked water-closets have been opened and cleansed by occupiers or owners, 61 defects in flushing apparatus, etc., being made good.

OCCUPIERS' NUISANCES.

The fact that out of 1,600 preliminary notices served 698 were directed to occupiers, shows that the department are fully alive to the desirability of assisting owners by securing the co-operation of tenants in the minimising of nuisances. The notices so served had reference to the filthy state of houses and outbuildings, overcrowding, and the keeping of animals in such a state as to create a nuisance. In two cases, where repeated notices to cleanse sanitary conveniences used in common had been ignored, summonses were issued against the occupiers, but the closets being opened prior to the hearing of the cases the summonses were withdrawn on payment of costs by the defaulters.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

Including the proceedings above referred to, summonses were issued under the Public Health Acts for the abatement of nuisances in ten cases. In seven of these cases the work was done prior to the final hearing, but in three instances, where the works had not been completed, orders were made for compliance with notices and for payment of costs.

A summons was also issued under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1903, for the closure of houses unfit

for human habitation. At the request of the owner an adjournment was granted, and the worst of the houses were subsequently demolished and new houses erected, extensive repairs also being carried out to the remaining houses.

WATER SUPPLY.

Five samples of water from wells were taken during the year, the Borough Analyst reporting unfavourably in four instances. In three cases water was subsequently laid on from main.

INSPECTION OF SLAUGHTER-HOUSES AND FOOD SUPPLY.

Five applications were made for new slaughter-house licenses, one of which was granted, the applications for renewal being all acceded to. There are now 37 slaughter-houses on the register, of which 12 are subject to annual license.

The Meat Inspector (H. Topping) has made 1,851 visits of inspection to slaughter-houses, and has examined 1,622 sides and 427 quarters of beef, 2,155 carcasses of sheep, lambs, calves or pigs, in addition to a large number of live animals.

The carcasses of six cows and one pig were affected with tuberculosis; the tubercular lesions in the first named being local in character, the affected portions alone were destroyed. The carcase of the pig was destroyed in its entirety, as were also the carcasses of two further pigs suffering from other diseases.

The total amount of meat surrendered or seized was as follows:—

Beef, diseased or unsound	...	...	194 lbs.
Pork	„	„	324 „
Other flesh foods	...	...	27 „
			<hr/>
Total	...	...	545 lbs.

In addition, 1,571 lbs. of fruit and other vegetables were destroyed.

Magistrates' orders were obtained in three cases, and in one instance a letter of caution was addressed to the vendor.

It should be stated that by far the larger proportion of the meat condemned was voluntarily surrendered by the owners.

One thousand nine hundred and fifty-three visits were paid to butchers' shops, 723 to fish, game and poultry shops, and 203 to bakehouses.

There are now 55 bakehouses on the register.

INSPECTION OF DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

Twenty-one applications were received for the registration of dairies, cowsheds and milkshops, the number of cowsheds and milkshops on the register being 31 and 69 respectively.

Two hundred and forty-eight visits have been paid by the Assistant Inspector or myself, and every effort is made to secure the milk supply from all possible sources of contamination.

INSPECTION OF COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

No new lodging house has been registered during the year, but the licenses of the three existing houses have all been renewed. Six hundred and forty visits of inspection were made by the District Inspectors or myself, but no case of infectious disease has this year been reported in connection with these lodging houses.

INSPECTION OF CANAL BOATS.

The number of canal boats inspected, viz., 333, exceeds that of any previous year. The following infringements were reported:—Want of registration, 5 cases; certificate not produced, 1 case; overcrowding, 9 cases; painting, 3 cases; dilapidations, 13 cases. Thirty intimation notices were sent with respect to these infringements, and 26 were subsequently complied with, correspondence taking place on the subject of the remaining four infringements at the end of the year.

In one case the steerer refused to produce his certificate, and was exceedingly abusive to Assistant Inspector Cotterell. Subsequently, however, he called at the office and expressed regret for his conduct.

In another instance, where a bad case of overcrowding had occurred, proceedings were threatened, but the owner promising to discharge the steerer, same were not instituted.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

The proceedings against the occupier of a certain fat-melting works at Hall End, which were referred to as pending at the end of the year, were subsequently withdrawn on the payment of costs, owing to the construction of apparatus for the condensation and destruction of fumes from the melting vats. Although several complaints have again been forthcoming, a considerable improvement has been effected, and with reasonable precautions and the keeping in repair of all parts of the apparatus, the nuisance might be greatly minimised.

An application to establish the business of a rag and bone dealer was refused.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The number of cases of infectious disease investigated was 199, other visits in connection with such cases numbering 101. It was not found necessary to obtain a magistrate's order for removal of the cases to the Infectious Diseases Hospital or to institute proceedings against patients and their friends for exposure.

REMOVAL OF NIGHTSOIL AND DRY REFUSE.

The work of the nightsoil contractors has during the past year been carried on in a manner which cannot be regarded as otherwise than very satisfactory. At no period of the year has there been any accumulation of arrears, and all applications handed over to the contractors have received prompt attention. The contents of 6,741 privies have been removed, the total cost of the nightsoil work being £3,208 3s. 4d.

The dustbin work which has been performed partly by the men in your employ and partly by special arrangements with two of the contractors, has cost £524 0s. 3d., the total cost of the scavenging of the Borough being therefore £3,739 3s. 7d., as compared with £3,721 14s. last year.

But for the stipulations in the contracts as to contractors being responsible for the emptying of dustbins substituted for ashpits and the provision of the Lyttleton Street tip, a considerable increase must have occurred in the cost of dustbin work, inasmuch as the number of bins on the weekly list has increased from 3,574 to 4,153, or an increase of 579, whilst the extra cost is only £10 18s. 2d.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

H. H. SPEARS, Assoc. Royal San. Inst.,
Chief Sanitary Inspector.

January, 1905.

TABLE I.

House-to-house inspections	1356
Miscellaneous inspections, including inspections of common yards and houses concerning which complaints have been received ...	12941
Re-inspections	4765
Visits to slaughter houses	1831
„ „ dairies, cowsheds, and milkshops ...	248
„ „ shops, butchers	1953
„ „ „ fish, game and poultry... ..	723
„ „ bakehouses, etc.	203
„ „ common lodging houses	640
Number of canal boats inspected	333
Cases of infectious disease visited and reported on	199
Other visits in connection with cases of infectious disease	101
Number of privies, etc., inspected and reported for emptying by staff	1800
Number of privies, etc., re-inspected after emptying	2696
Sundry Visits	662
<hr/>	
Total number of inspections and visits ...	30451
<hr/>	
Number of preliminary notices served... ..	1600
„ „ statutory notices served	235
„ „ legal proceedings taken	12
„ „ letters written to owners <i>re</i> nuisances	346
Notices served under Canal Boats Acts ...	30
Reports sent to Surveyor, <i>re</i> dangerous buildings, etc.	106
Reports sent to Water Company <i>re</i> waste of water	200
Number of rooms disinfected	122
Number of reports sent to schools <i>re</i> infectious diseases	91
Samples of water taken for analysis	5

TABLE II.

PRELIMINARY NOTICES SERVED AND NUMBER
OF HOUSES IN CONNECTION WITH NOTICES.

	Notices served.	Houses in connection with Notices.
Filthy and dilapidated houses ...	233	518
Filthy and dilapidated outbuildings ...	90	411
Defective paving and surface channels...	34	95
Defective eaves and downspouting ...	39	114
Insufficient drainage ...	36	85
Foul untrapped or defective drainage ...	6	29
Choked drainage and water-closets ...	103	200
Insufficient privy accommodation ...	2	2
Insufficient ashpit accommodation ...	45	95
Foul, wet, open, and dilapidated privy- middens ...	147	327
Defective water-closet connections ...	63	231
Fouling of sanitary conveniences used in common ...	584	584
Overcrowded houses or rooms...	54	64
Animals improperly kept ...	60	56
Offensive accumulations ...	12	21
Water in cellars ...	10	13
Insufficient water supply ...	13	15
Houses unfit for habitation ...	—	—
Filthy bakehouses ...	12	12
Filthy workshops ...	14	14
Dairies and cowsheds not kept in accord- ance with regulations ...	13	13
Polluted wells ...	1	1
Slaughter houses ...	1	1
Miscellaneous ...	24	34
Alteration of urinal accommodation ...	4	4
	<hr/> 1600	<hr/> 2939

TABLE III.

SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS CARRIED OUT IN
DISTRICT IN PURSUANCE OF INSPECTIONS
MADE AND NOTICES SERVED.

Interior of Houses—

Filthy houses cleansed and whitewashed ...	503
Houses in which repairs to plastering, brickwork or woodwork have been carried out ...	182
Flooded cellars drained or filled in ...	10

Exterior of Houses—

Defective roofs made watertight ...	58
Houses without eaves, spouting, or with choked or defective spouting—new spouting provided or existing spouting cleansed and repaired ...	88
Damp external walls. Brickwork repaired or covered with impervious coating ...	6
Dangerous chimneys repaired ...	4

Yards and Outbuildings—

Surface paving in yards provided, renewed, or repaired ...	53
Dangerous wells or cisterns filled in or suitable coverings provided ...	22
Filthy and dilapidated outbuildings cleansed and repaired ...	159

Drainage—

Absence of or insufficient drainage. Premises drained and connected to sewer or cesspool...	11
Surface channels abolished and stoneware pipe drains provided ...	110
Defective drainage relaid or repaired ...	10
Number of manhole inspection chambers provided to drainage systems ...	108
Foul untrapped drains. Stoneware gully traps fixed ...	2
Additional gullies fixed ...	373
Choked drains opened and cleansed...	69

Privies, Water-closets, and Ashpits—

Privies abolished	337
Middens abolished	238
Water-closets with flush cisterns substituted for privies	354
Waste water-closets substituted for privies ...	1
Foul, wet and open privy-middens filled in, covered and ventilated	0
Additional water-closets provided	6
Dilapidated privies and ashpits repaired ...	33
Percolations of faecal matter from privies, privies, etc., cemented	30
Galvanised dustbins provided in lieu of ashpits, or where accommodation insufficient	279
Additional ashbins provided	151
Middens abolished and converted into dry ashpits	12
Choked water-closets opened and cleansed ...	161
Defective W.C. connections made good ...	42
Insufficient supply of water to W.C.'s. Flush improved	34
Defective tippers renewed and inspection chambers provided to waste water-closets ...	19
Absence of sufficient urinal accommodation. Urinals provided	3

Keeping of Animals and Offensive Accumulations—

Nuisances from the keeping of swine abated...	7
Fowls or other poultry kept in dwelling houses or so as to be a nuisance—removed from premises	64
Offensive accumulations removed from premises	22

Overcrowding—

Houses overcrowded—numbers reduced ...	60
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Miscellaneous—

Manure pits provided or repaired	1
Miscellaneous nuisances abated	30
Filthy approaches to privies cleansed by occupiers	45
Vans removed out of district	10

Housing of the Working Classes Act—

Houses unfit for human habitation closed or repaired	...	...	...	...	11
Houses unfit for human habitation pulled down					3

Water Supply—

Houses without a proper supply of drinking water—water laid on	...	...	...	9
Polluted wells closed and water laid on from main	...	...	...	2

Factory and Workshops Act—

Workshops or workrooms cleansed	...	...	4
Filthy and dilapidated bakehouses cleansed or repaired	...	...	9
Separate W.C. accommodation provided for females	...	...	1
Overcrowded workroom—number reduced	...		1

Dairies and Cowsheds—

Cowsheds provided with sufficient means of lighting	...	...	...	...	1
Cowsheds provided with sufficient means of ventilation	...	...	...	...	2
Cowsheds drained or repaired			...	...	2
„ cleansed and limewashed			...	...	3
Dairies repaired or additional accommodation provided	...	...	...	...	5

Total ... 3760

TABLE IV.—RESULTS OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

Situation of Premises.	Nature of Complaint.	Act under which proceedings instituted.	Result.
Fat Melting Works, Hall End	Effluvia Nuisance	Public Health Act, 1875, Sec. 114	Case adjourned on two occasions. Special condensing apparatus provided and summons then withdrawn on payment of costs, £1 6s.
Nos. 18 to 30, Sams Lane	Houses unfit for human habitation	Housing of Working Classes Act, 1903, Sec. 8	Two adjournments granted, during which houses re-built or repaired, and case then withdrawn on payment of costs, £1 1s.
Nos. 4, Sand Street and 16, Grout Street	Dirty and dilapidated houses and outhouses	Public Health Act, 1875, Sec. 94	Case adjourned to permit execution of work on three separate occasions, when case withdrawn on payment of costs, £1 13s. 6d.
Nos. 14 to 20 and 1 and 3, Foredraft, Oak Lane	Foul state of Sanitary conveniences used in common	Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, Sec. 21	Work done prior to hearing of case. Summons withdrawn and order made on occupiers by consent for payment of costs, 7s. 6d. each, excepting in one instance where defendant was fined 5s. and costs, amounting to 8s. 6d.
Nos. 26 to 38, Oak Lane	Do. do.	Do. do.	Work done prior to hearing of case. Summons withdrawn and order made on occupiers by consent for payment of costs, 7s. 6d. each.

TABLE IV.—RESULTS OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS—(*continued*).

Situation of Premises.	Nature of Complaint.	Act under which proceedings instituted.	Results.
No. 55, Stoney Lane	Dirty and dilapidated house and defective spouting	Public Health Act, 1875, Sec. 94	Adjournment granted to enable work to be completed, when summons withdrawn on payment of costs, 9s. 6d.
No. 27, Claypit Lane	Leaking roof, dilapidated outbuildings and defective paving and drainage	Do. do.	Case adjourned 28 days. Works having been completed, summons withdrawn and order made for payment of £1 1s. costs
Nos. 2 and 4, Globe Street	Dilapidated outbuildings	Do. do.	Adjournment granted for 14 days. Work done and summons withdrawn on payment of costs, 13s. 4d.
Nos. 38, 40 and 44, Woodward Street	Dirty and dilapidated houses and outbuildings and defective spouting	Do. do.	Case adjourned on two occasions. Order made for work to be done and for £1 1s. costs
No. 36, Woodward Street	Dirty and dilapidated house	Do. do.	Do. do. do.
No. 27, Walter Street	Broken tipper to waste water-closet	Do. do.	Work done prior to hearing of case. Summons withdrawn on payment of costs, 10s. 6d.
Nos. 26 to 38, Oak Lane	Choked and defective drainage	Do. do.	Work done after two adjournments. Order for payment of costs, £1 1s.

Food and Drugs Inspector's Report,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 1904.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

Herewith I beg to submit a Report of the work carried out under the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts during the year ended December 31st, 1904.

I have obtained 146 samples under the provisions of the above Acts, consisting of the following:—New milk, 64; skim milk, 1; butter, 39; cheese, 1; lard, 1; white pepper, 8; coffee, 4; coffee mixture, 1; cream of tartar, 3; ground ginger, 1; camphorated oil, 1; glycerine, 1; compound liquorice powder, 1; whisky, 9; gin, 2; rum, 2; brandy, 2; ice cream, 5.

Of these 141 were submitted to and were analysed by the Public Analyst, who certified 125 samples (88.65 per cent.) as “genuine,” 12 samples (8.51 per cent.) as “inferior,” and 4 samples (2.83 per cent.) as “adulterated.”

The inferior samples were 11 milks and 1 ground ginger.

The adulterated samples consisted of 2 milks, 1 cream of tartar, and 1 gin.

The five samples of ice cream were not submitted for analysis, being taken more as a warning to the vendors, as it was thought that the taking of such samples would have a good moral effect.

Proceedings were taken against the vendors of the two adulterated milk samples. Strong evidence was produced for the defence that such milk had been tampered with before it left the possession of the wholesale dealer, and accordingly the cases were withdrawn on payment of costs, £2 1s.

The amount of adulteration in the sample of gin was so slight that it was not thought advisable for proceedings to be taken, and the vendor was accordingly cautioned.

In the appended table, I give particulars of the nature, number and quality of the articles examined.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

GEO. WM. DAVIS,
Inspector.

Nature of Food or Drug.	No. of Samples An'lysd	Genuine.	Inferior.	Adulterated.	Cautioned.	Prosecuted.	Convicted.	Amount of Penalty.	Amount of Costs.	Remarks.
New Milk	64	51	11	2	...	2	2	£ s. d.	2 1 0	
Skim Milk	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Butter	39	39	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cheese	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lard	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
White Pepper	8	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Coffee	4	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Coffee Mixture	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cream of Tartar	3	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Ground Ginger	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Camphorated Oil	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Glycerine	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Com. Liquorice Powder	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Whisky	9	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gin	2	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
Rum	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brandy	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	141	125	12	4	1	2	2	...	2 1 0	

Analyst's Report,

*To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee,
County Borough of West Bromwich.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to report that during the year ended December 31st, 1904, 141 samples of foods and drugs were received for analysis under the Food and Drugs Acts. The whole of the samples were submitted to me by the Inspector appointed to administer the Acts.

In the appended table particulars are given of the nature of the articles analysed, and they are also divided into three classes, accordingly as I found them to be:—

- (1) Genuine and of good quality.
- (2) Genuine, complying with the necessarily low limits, but of poor quality.
- (3) Adulterated.

Description of Article.	Total Number of Samples	Genuine Samples.	Genuine but Inferior Samples.	Adul- terated Samples.
Milk	64	51	11	2
Skim Milk	1	1	...	...
Butter	39	39	...	...
Cheese	1	1	...	...
Lard	1	1	...	...
Pepper	8	8	...	...
Cream of Tartar	3	2	...	1
Ground Ginger	1	...	1	...
Glycerine	1	1	...	...
Camphorated Oil	1	1	...	...
Coffee	4	4	...	...
Coffee Mixture	1	1	...	...
Compound Liquorice Powder	1	1	...	...
Spirits	15	14	...	1
	141	125	12	4

The number of adulterated samples is 4, which represents a percentage of 2.8, and this is the most favourable figure that I have so far recorded.

In 1896 it was as high as 25.9 per cent., but fell to 5.3 per cent. in 1900. The markedly lower percentage of adulteration for the past year, with the absence of any gross forms of sophistication, may, I think, be taken to show a gratifying improvement in the purity of the food supplied in your Borough.

A list of the articles that were condemned is given in the following table, with particulars as to the nature of the adulteration.

Description of Article.	Nature of Adulteration.	Remarks.
Milk	Added water, 4 per cent. Deficient of 14 per cent. of its natural fat.	Paid costs, £1 1s.
Milk	Added water, 4 per cent. Deficient of 13 per cent. of its natural fat.	Paid costs, 19s.
Cream of Tartar...	Contained a foreign ingredient, viz., 5.93 per cent. of sulphate of lime.	No action.
Gin	Contained 1 per cent. of water in excess of the legal limit.	Vendor cautioned.

It will be observed that, as in previous years, milk received more attention at the hands of your Inspector than any other food, 65 samples, or nearly half the total articles reported on, being submitted for analysis. This regular systematic inspection would appear to have a very beneficial effect on the quality of the supply, for only two milks, or three per cent., were found to be adulterated. Eleven other samples were of an inferior character, but were reported genuine, as they complied with the milk regulations of the Board of Agriculture.

All the other dairy produce gave satisfactory results.

The remaining cases of adulteration were of a trivial character.

A gin contained 1 per cent. of water beyond the legal limit, and a sample of cream of tartar was contaminated with practically 6 per cent. of gypsum or sulphate of lime.

In addition to the work under the Food and Drugs Acts, five samples of well water were reported on. All the waters were tainted with sewage or animal matter, and were therefore condemned as being unsafe for drinking purposes.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

HARRY SILVESTER.